

Submitted Testimony to: Senator, Jonathan Harris; Representative, Betsy Ritter
and the Public Health Committee Members.

In Support of: Raised Bill 5630
Submitted by: Mary Ann Llinas RDH, B.S.
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I am a public health dental hygienist who serves the “under served” population. On a daily basis I am confronted with children and adults whom already are inflicted with dental disease, especially children at the tender age of 2. I am sad and disturbed that dental disease is on the rise. There is a shortage of dentists to treat the most vulnerable population; this is where the disease spreads. Dental disease is preventable, curable but only if we can treat the disease effectively and not allow it to spread and cause further damage, infection and possibly death. How many times have I treated a patient whom has a small area of decay starting that can be very easily treated? They return to see me months later, only to see the decay has grown and spread and now is in need of more in-depth treatment. I am always asked “can you fix that” and I have to say “No”.

We as dental hygienists’ would like to be able to meet more of our special needs population , the underserved population with no other access to care options, take on the battle in reducing dental disease. We have on the table the advanced dental hygiene practitioner Master’s degree position to assist in this battle of dental disease and work with dental professionals to make that change. In no way will it detract from dentistry, we would not be asking for something that is going to take away from the DDS or DMD, we as a profession want to help stop the disease in those patients who need it the most, the “under served” This will complement dentistry and add to dental hygiene a component to aid the people to add an important component to our profession, just as nurse practitioners have to the medical field.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. I may be reached for further discussion at 203-913-4092.